

NEW ZEALAND SEA CANOEIST

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Association of Sea Kayakers
(NZ) Inc - KASK**

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INDEX

EDITORIAL p. 3

KASK

Anakiwa 2014 Forum p. 5
 Photo competition p.5
 Award nominations p.5
 Notice of AGM p.5
 President's Report to Jan/14
 by Ian McKenzie p.5

NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS

Beneath Glowing Skies
 (Around Stewart Island)
 by Tara Mulvany p. 6

TECHNICAL

Paddle Leashes
 by Sandy Winterton p.11
 by Kevin Dunsford p.12
 by Mike Scanlan p.13
 by Tara Mulvany p.13

OVERSEAS REPORTS

Jason Beachcroft around Australia
 by Paul Caffyn p.14
 Freya Around South America
 by Paul Caffyn p.14
 Sri Lanka
 by Paul Caffyn p.15
 France to Istanbul
 from website p.15
 South America to Florida
 from website p.15

BOOKS

NZ Sea Kayak Books
 The Circumnavigation Narratives
 by Kerry Howe p.16

OBITUARIES

Maggie Oakley
 by Paul Caffyn p.18
 Percy Blandford
 by Alan Hyde p.19
 from *The Telegraph* p.20

HUMOUR p.21

Thanks to all the contributors

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Deadline for next newsletter:

25 March 2013

EDITORIAL

Anakiwa 2014 KASK Forum

My apologies for missing three numbers with the direct credit details on the 2014 KASK forum registration form. I blamed the proof-reader who seems to have subsequently been abducted by aliens. The numbers have been corrected on the KASK website: Westpac - KASK 2014 Forum 03 0855 0400157 001

Friday night, 8 – 10 pm, is planned with eight 15 min PP talks, 10 minutes for the talks, five minutes for questions and changeovers. To date, talks on paddling in Croatia, and the recent 'Southern Ice Rescue.' Six more slots available – please get in touch if you have a trip to share. Please register soonest - for we need to give the Outward Bound cooking staff a firm number of paddlers who require gargantuan meals.

Tara Mulvany

Tara Mulvany paddled across Cook Strait on 17 December 2013, and despite the non-show of summer to date, she has been working her way up the West Coast of the North Island.

On 25 January, Tara headed out of the Manukau Harbour to paddle up to Muriwai. In a brief email she noted: 'Manukau bar = scariest place I have ever been in a kayak! Did not find the northern sneak lead and I was forced left out to sea. Let's say I was dodging house-sized breakers for about 5 kms offshore. It was the most terrifying place I have been in a kayak.'

On 29 January, Tara paddled from Kaipara Harbour to Glinks Gully, after waiting at Pouto in Kaipara Harbour for winds to subside and swell to ease. Late 30 January, Tara had reached a reef-protected landing at Kawerua and hopes to reach Shipwreck Bay on 31 January. She is a gutsy young lady but does not



Tara Mulvany at Opunake in the South Taranaki Bight, 5 January. She was sadly labeled 'Paddle-happy kayak queen' by the Taranaki Daily News. Photo: Charlotte Curd.

want to blow her record to date of two rolls and no swims. Tara will be the first woman to paddle around the North Island. Tara has four more big surf landings before rounding Cape Maria van Diemen, and the end of the massive surf of the West Coast.

Tara has a new website (www.taras-journeys.com) with intermittent blog coverage, a photo gallery and previous expeditions. And her really good recent news is that Craig Potton Publishing is printing a book later this year on her winter paddle around the South Island. Not only a talented paddler but also her story (page 6) on a five week solo paddle around Stewart Island is a great read with excellent descriptive writing.

Kiwi Paddling Narratives

Recently I felt it was time to review in brief all the New Zealand paddling books and guides. While scanning covers, I quickly realized that there were too many for one article so I put a big lean on Kerry Howe to start with the circumnavigation paddling narratives. Kerry is a well-established author with numerous books on the history of the Pacific and his paddling manual *Coastal Sea*

Cover & page 2 photo captions:

Abi and Eve cruising on the tannin rich waters of Freshwater River, which runs into Paterson Inlet after draining a vast area of the north-west corner of Stewart Island. Photo: Tara Mulvany

Top Left: Melz Grant welcoming Tara Mulvany ashore at Waikawa Beach. Photo: Max Grant

Bottom Left: Simon Meek keeping a wary eye on a sea lion near a hunter's hut, in Port Pegasus on Stewart Island.

Photo: Tara Mulvany

(see Tara's story of her paddle around Stewart Island on p.6)

Kayaking in New Zealand (2005) is still in print.

Paddle Leashes

Sandy Winterton has penned a technical article on types of paddle leashes and how to make your own. I sought feedback also from paddlers Kevin Dunsford, Mike Scanlan and Tara Mulvany, for their views on their own use, and choice of leashes

Paddlecraft Incidents January 2014

Unfortunately one paddler drowned off Gisborne in January (no PFD or emergency comms), and there were several rescues, four schoolboys on the Taranaki coast and a father and son rescued from the rocks under Godley Head (Lyttelton Harbour).

In Australia, another father and son rescued by virtue of a PLB, and an Albany couple (WA) were lucky to survive a sit-on-top capsize, along with their dog. A single phone call for help, before the cellphone died, led to the woman and dog being found 1.5 kms offshore, clinging to an esky. The bloke was found on shore with the kayak.

Overseas Reports

Updates on the big trips underway at the moment include Jason Beachcroft, who now has paddled all three sets of long cliffs on his Round Aussie trip. Also Sandy Robson who will soon be paddling across Palk Strait from India and paddling around Sri Lanka.

From Conrad Edwards Porirua Harbour 'Waterquake' 20 January 2013

Felt my first earthquake in a kayak on Monday with the 6.2 in Eketahuna - I'd been out chasing boats in *Ronin* the nordy, and was recovering off deepwater point (Paramata), stationary in just a foot or two of quiet water, with Alison in her nordy. Alison said her boat was vibrating, then I felt it too - a weird rhythmic heaving, perhaps six in as many seconds, then all quiet. Took us a few seconds to register earthquake, so looked around at land - nothing obviously collapsed or swaying, so we assumed tsunami risk low and carried on paddling. Some folk on the Mana wharf confirmed it was an earthquake as well as a 'waterquake'. We probably wouldn't have felt it if we'd been moving or in deep or rough water (Nordy = Nordkapp).

KASK Committee 2012 - 2013

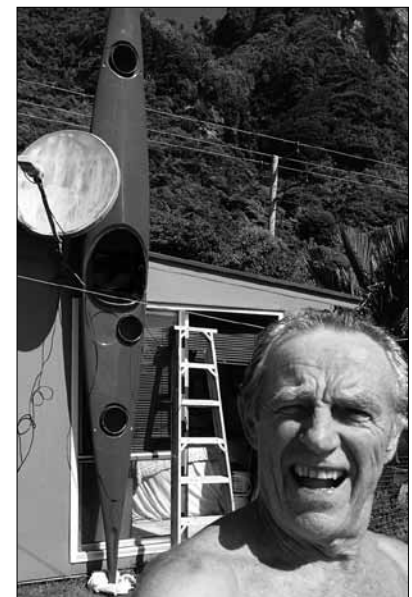
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Where is Summer?

'January-March weather is expected to be pretty average, according to NIWA (8 January). There was neither El Nino nor La Nina conditions last month but El Nino development becomes increasingly likely by mid-year reaching about a 50% chance. For the coming three months as a whole, lower than normal pressures are forecast to the south-east of the country. This circulation is expected to be associated with a weak anomalous flow the north-easterly quarter.' Safe paddling this summer.

Paul Caffyn

(after doing an end pour in the kayak)



KIWI KAYAKING KALENDAR

Sea Kayak Skills Training

15 - 16 Feb 2014 - Okains Bay - Banks Peninsula

The Canterbury Sea Kayak Network has organised a programme of free instruction to be run over the weekend of 15/16 February at Okains Bay. Volunteer instruction from kayakers such as John Kirk-Anderson, Martin & Fiona Fraser, Doug Aitken, David Welch, Owen and Toni Shrimpton will cover a range of skills starting with kayak confidence for novices, kayaking specific first aid, paddling & rescue techniques, surf landings & on to more advanced techniques for experienced kayakers.

Registration from 9.00am Saturday, programme starts 9.30am with briefing and will wind up Sunday afternoon. Everyone welcome.

Camp ground fee applies if you stay the night. Bring \$2 coins for hot showers.

See www.sportsground.co.nz/canterburyseakayak and

www.facebook.com/groups/canterburyseakayak/

Phone: Ian McKenzie: (03) 355 0684

KASK FORUM

Date: 4 - 7 April 2014

Venue: Anakiwa Outward Bound School in the Marlborough Sounds

See four page registration form in *New Zealand Sea Canoeist* No. 167

or register on line via the 'events page' on the KASK website.

KASK FORUM 2014 - Anakiwa

KASK AGM

The AGM will be held approx. 6 pm Saturday 5 April 2014 in the Anakiwa dining hall. Nominations are sought for the 2014-15 committee positions, along with any motions to be put to the AGM. Please email to KASK administrator Karen Grant: admin@kask.org.nz

ANNUAL KASK AWARDS

Nominations are sought for the three annual KASK awards – email to Karen Grant:

1. Graham Egarr Trophy award for outstanding contribution(s) to the KASK newsletter during the past 12 months
2. Graham Egarr Trophy award for outstanding contribution to New Zealand sea kayaking during the past 12 months
3. The 'Bugger!' Trophy, awarded for the most humiliating, embarrassing, humorous sea kayaking encounter over the 12 months.

ANNUAL KASK PHOTO COMPETITION

Enter your best photographs in this prestigious photo competition. Entries must have a sea kayaking or coastal connection. Sorry but no mail entries. The competition is only for paddlers attending the forum. Please ensure your photo is submitted to the appropriate category.

Guidelines:

Photos may be entered for the following categories:

- Open (knock you socks off photos)
- Action (sea kayaking)
- Seascape (kayaks or people do not dominate the picture)
- Coastal / marine flora or fauna
- Kayaking bloopers / bugger! moments / salty humour

First, 2nd and 3rd places awarded per category, with a forum paddlers' choice for the best overall photo, and prizes awarded for first places.

Limit:

Four photos per photographer, per category.

Format/Techniques:

- colour or black and white prints to a maximum size of A3;
- note on each photo's rear: category, caption or locale, name, mail address, email address.
- no slides please; only digital or colour / b & w negative prints.
- images can only be edited with: cropping and resizing, lightening and darkening, dodging and burning, sharpening, and colour correction. In other words, images may be 'tweaked' to improve impact, but no manipulation such as cloning is acceptable.

Submission:

Entries can be submitted on arrival at the forum, up to 9 am Saturday 5 April 2014.

While every care is taken, KASK will not accept liability for damage to entries.

Usage of Photos:

Winning photos may be published in the KASK Newsletter. Photo competition entrants agree to allow their entries to appear in the KASK newsletter, and agree to enter in discussion with KASK re their use in either KASK safety promotional material or the handbook.

Display of Photos:

The photos will be displayed throughout the weekend and the winners announced at the dinner on Saturday night or at Sunday breakfast.

KASK

President's Report for January 2014 from Ian McKenzie

The drownings on Lake Tarawera reported in the last newsletter (No. 167 Oct/Nov 2013) have prompted discussion amongst KASK members about what our organization is doing, can do, and should do to keep people safe in kayaks and other paddle craft. The discussion is wider than paddle craft, but I'll limit my comments just to kayaks and the like.

I have a strong sense that amongst our members and the networks and clubs with which they paddle, that there is good understanding of the risks involved in kayaking and of the precautions that need to be taken to minimise harm. Our annual forum, network training events, mini forums, the example we set and practices we demonstrate on the beach, on and in the water all contribute.

Do we influence national safety programmes? I think we do, though it has taken me a while to sort out in my mind what the difference is between the National Pleasure Boat Safety forum (run by Maritime NZ) and our membership of Water Safety New Zealand (an incorporated society) and what our participation means to KASK members.

It helped me to go to Queenstown last October to contribute to the talk, see the analysis and reports on drowning, safety campaigns and legislation, and continue the representation that Paul Caffyn, Sandy Winterton, Conrad Edwards and others have made and continue to make. I'll produce a longer statement about these two national organisations soon - for now keep thinking, listening to those who have been kayaking longer than you, and seek advice from people with expertise wherever you can find it, for example at the Forum at Anakiwa in April. The KASK AGM will be held at the Forum and you are invited to present to the KASK committee in advance, any motions you want discussed and to nominate committee member for 2014/2015. Email to Karen please: admin@kask.org.nz

Saturday Night Dancing at Anakiwa After 10pm

Susan Cade and Paul Caffyn are keen to host (instruct) dancing in the main hall after 10pm. Susan is a whizz at ballroom and barn dancing, while Paul is not too bad at salsa and rock and roll. Bring your dancing shoes and slinky salsa dresses (not obligatory for blokes - trousers and shirts will do).

NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS

Beneath The Glowing Skies (Around Stewart Island) by Tara Mulvany

(see also colour photo on page 2)

Deep in the Roaring Forties lies a lonely island. It's known as Rakiura, the land of the glowing skies. In 1770, on Captain Cook's first visit to southern New Zealand on board the *Endeavour*, he mistakenly thought the island was connected to the South Island. He named it South Cape - probably the biggest error on the first map charted of New Zealand.

For a long time, a circumnavigation of Stewart Island had been at the back of my mind. When Sim and I set off in May 2012 to paddle around the South Island, we had intended to boost around Rakiura as well. But at the time we'd underestimated the enormity of the task ahead of us, and it wasn't long before we decided to focus solely on the South Island. A good thing really, as who wants to paddle quickly around such an amazing place?

I had been working in Australia and my life was dull and boring. It was time to do something fun. So several days after returning to the Land of the Long White Cloud, I was busy packing my gear for an escape into the wilderness. Two friends, Abi and Eve - both kayak guides in Fiordland - would be joining me for the first week or so, before they'd turn around and paddle back to Oban. From there on, I would be alone.

Nearing the day of our departure from Bluff, I was faced with the tough decision - either to catch the ferry across to the island, or to wait for the weather window that I would need in order to paddle across Foveaux Strait. As much as I wanted to paddle the strait, I also didn't want to waste valuable days when I could have been paddling with friends. So



The mountain of gear to go in the kayaks, at Oban, Halfmoon Bay with the hotel in the background.

the ferry won over my desire to paddle across, and on a grey windy morning on 2 November 2013 we stood on the beach in Oban, beside our kayaks and a small mountain of gear.

A crowd of about 50 people milled around near the beach, but it turned out they hadn't come out to see us off. They had instead gathered to watch the Stewart Island Man competition and we had interrupted their manly activities. We were asked to move from the beach. A few fishermen walked past. "Where are you going?" They asked. After explaining our plans they wished us luck with scepticism and carried on their way. I secretly hoped I would bump into them on the ocean further south on a rough day. Maybe then they wouldn't be such doubters.

With our kayaks fully loaded we paddled around the corner and into Paterson Inlet. The wind was gusting and strong and we fought for every kilometre as we headed west. We slept that night in an open shelter at Millars Beach - an old Norwegian whaling base. The next morning we paddled towards Freshwater River, which wound its way inland in twists and turns. Halfway up the river, we heard a boat approaching and quickly made our way to the side. The water taxi guy stopped

and took a photo of us. Apparently we were the first kayakers he'd ever seen up the river.

We walked barefoot over to Mason Bay for the night. The place was deserted, not a single trumper in sight. For dinner we ate fresh blue cod fillets, the first of our trip. On the way to the beach to watch the sunset we saw a kiwi, sprinting down the track at full speed. The beach was flat and wide. Huge wind blown clouds streaked the dark sky. Surf exploded in lines of foamy whiteness and giant pieces of driftwood lay well clear of the high tide mark. It was an extreme sort of place, as remote as it was beautiful.

We spent a couple of days in the inlet. Abi and I climbed up Mt Rakeahura, its summit covered in a thick, misty cloud. The track through the forest and then scrub, was well formed. We jumped over puddles, occasionally sinking in below our knees, the thick mud oozing between our toes.

One night in a hut, millions of mosquitoes tormented me, buzzing in my ears in the dark. It was too much for me to handle, so after some bitter words I began splattering them all over the walls and roof with a jandal, much to the amusement of Abi and Eve.

On a warm and cloudless day we paddled by thousands of jellyfish on our way to Ulva Island. We walked over to the other side of the Island, looking for rare native birds but failing miserably. I'm not known for my ability to walk slowly. We lay on the golden beach soaking in the sun for an hour or two before paddling into Big Glory Cove to find somewhere to camp. On the way Abi spotted a sea lion in the shallows. It was having sexy time with a lady a quarter of his size. Eve and I moved closer, but hurriedly back paddled when it barked and lunged towards us. This was the first of what was to be many encounters with these scary creatures.

The next morning we set off early, piercing the mist as we paddled



Tara in the middle, with Abi (left) and Eve, at dawn in Chew Tobacco Bay, on the east coast of Stewart Is.

north around The Neck - a thin piece of land blocking most of the entrance to the inlet. A small swell rolled on the calm sea. We followed close to the coast, just clear of the waves that were breaking on the rocky shore. Seaweed swirled with the current, and a lone Mollymawk glided in close and gave us a show. Late morning we cruised into Chew Tobacco Bay, the furthest south we would paddle together.

We caught a feed of blue cod, and spent another lazy afternoon in the sun on the beach. Who would have thought this was possible on Stewart Island? After a feed of crumbed blue cod fillets with fresh lemon, veges and rice, washed down with Eve's treasured bottle of coke, we lit a bonfire on the beach. It was a warming end to a week filled with fun times with friends.

Next morning, in the faint light of dawn, the girls paddled away. I stood on the beach and watched them slowly disappear. An hour later I slid my boat onto the water and paddled south. The sky grew darker and the rain began to fall. I paddled into Port Adventure, in and out of small bays, under a dripping world. In front of me lay some of the most beautiful white sand beaches I had ever seen. They put the Whitsundays to shame. Soaked and hungry, I pulled up at a hunter's hut. I lit the pot-belly stove and cooked a feed. For three days the winds raged, bringing

squalls of rain, which pounded on the tin roof.

When the fronts finally passed, I made a break for the coast. A group of seals followed me. I was nervous. Sharks like seals and I was in great white shark country. Around the corner I caught a big trumpeter and fastened him under the bungy cords on the front of my kayak. I paddled slowly in the rain, winding in and out of small bays and under overhangs and caves in the rock. Penguins squawked, and the rain belted down. I paddled through a narrow gap between an island, aiming for Lords River, just around the next headland.

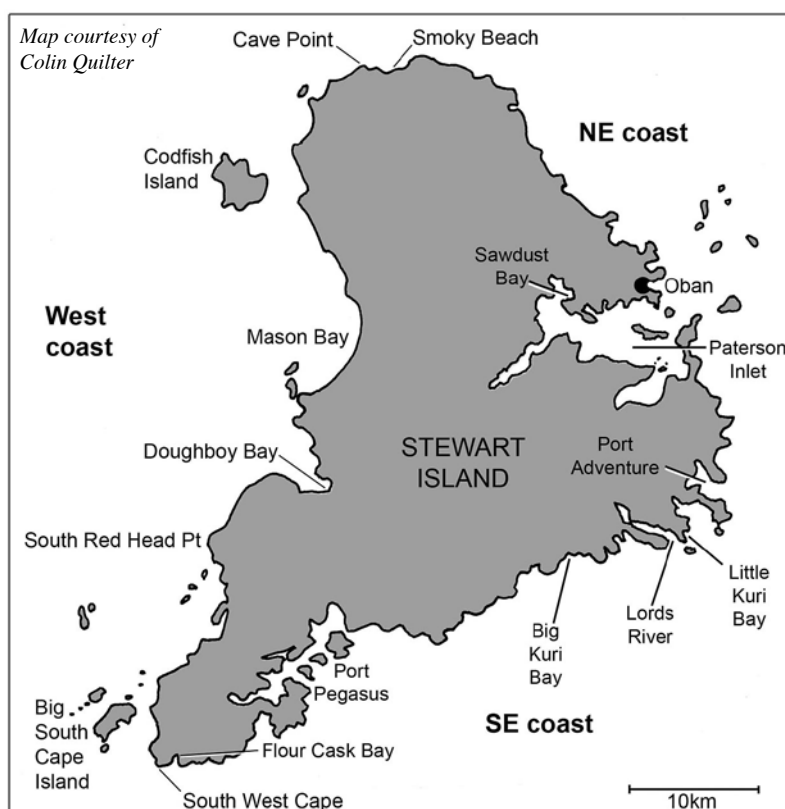
What I couldn't see from where I was, was a tidal stream ripping through the gap. Waves surged over a couple of shallow rocks and timing it, I paddled over them. There was no turning back. On the other side of the gap, the wind was strong and gusting and the seas were steep and breaking heavily on the rocks. I paddled hard, facing into the swell and wind, taking the point wide as I slowly moved into the open river mouth. It was only about 600 m of paddling, but it was a scary ferry to



Tara's sheltered landing in Lords River, east coast of Stewart Island

safety. By the time I reached sheltered waters I had been well and truly soaked. But my fish was still chilling out under the bungy cords. Relief.

A series of strong southerly winds battered the coast for a few days. I paddled way inland on the calm river at high tide, winding in and out of small bays for a couple of hours. I pulled up at yet another hunter's hut. These huts are amazing, es-





Tara on a beautiful Stewart Island November day, on the granite summit of Magog.

pecially in November when there wasn't a hunter in sight.

Next day the forecast was in the making of a Tui advert. Sea slight, variable 10 knots. Yeah right. On a three metre south-west swell I paddled to Port Pegasus. It was an exposed 35 km stretch of coast, and the big seas forced me offshore from the stunning coast. The island's east coast is the most amazing piece of coast I have ever paddled. At least I'd say it was on par with the Fiordland coast. Slowly the sky cleared and by mid-afternoon I arrived into Pegasus.

In front of me was a wild landscape, where giant granite boulders lay scattered on hilltops, and the intriguing peaks of Gog and Magog rose above the ocean through the afternoon haze. I was alone in this perfect wilderness.

In past years, Port Pegasus had been a base for ship building, tin mining and fishing. At one stage in history there was a hotel, a shop and a school. Very little remains to show for those industrial days.

That night I read in a hut book, "There is a good track to Magog that starts from here." Sweet, I thought, I won't have to paddle down Cook Arm to get closer. The next morning I set off. The track wound its way through the forest. It was easy to follow and soon it broke through a

thick band of manuka scrub and into the open. From a distance, the open land spanned in all directions looked easy to walk through. Some parts were. It was hard to believe on this perfect blue sky morning that for a majority of the year, this landscape is battered by violent winds. Only the thickest of scrub can live in these harsh conditions.

The track quickly disappeared, and I walked along in the sunshine, feeling content. I wouldn't have been anywhere else. But this feeling didn't last long. The ankle high scrub slowly grew taller, and I found myself pushing through thick chest height manuka scrub. I pushed on, thinking I'd emerge from the other side, but it only grew denser. I resorted to crawling along the ground under the manuka, pushing my way through the spindly trees, my pack catching on anything and everything possible. Finally, frustrated, I spied daylight ahead through the undergrowth. But I soon discovered that I'd come too far right and I'd hit Cook Arm. I should have just paddled.

The thought of retracing my steps was enough to make me check that my drybag pack was securely rolled, before I jumped into the shallow water and swam towards the peaks. The water was surprisingly warm, and with the sun shining down, it really wasn't that bad. I was innocent to the stories of seven-gilled sharks

that lurk in these warm and shallow waters, tales that I would later hear. Half an hour later I reached the end of Cook Arm and thankfully, found the 'track'. I followed it for a short while up onto a small ridge, but soon enough it disappeared. I was frustrated and beaten but I pushed on into the scrub. I've done a lot of bush bashing in my time but the scrub in Pegasus was by far the wildest I've ever encountered. The only saving grace was that most of the time I could see the peaks, so it was easy to navigate my way towards them.

All my frustrations were wiped away the second I reached the saddle below Magog. The Titi/Muttonbird Islands spanned across the glassy ocean to the west, and in the barren landscape all around me lay thousands of granite boulders. I was finally here, looking down on the islands that I had dreamt about for a long time. An hour later, I stood on the summit of Magog, the sun on my face and the rock warm under my feet. This was everything I could have hoped for. After a couple of hours on the summit, I retraced my steps back to the saddle. When the sun disappeared and the light began to fade, I curled up in my sleeping bag under a huge rock.

And that is when I heard the noise. It was a sonic low-pitched booming sound that I had never heard before. For those of you who don't understand the significance of this,

I'll tell you a little about the Kakapo. The Kakapo is one of the rarest parrots in the world. It's also the heaviest parrot in the world, is flightless, and comes out at night. The last bird to be found in the wild was up on the Tin Range, not far from where I was camped, in 1997.

Since returning from Rakiura, I have spoken with the Kakapo Recovery team and learnt some very interesting facts. Firstly, male Kakapo don't usually start booming until December. They don't boom every summer – only every two to four years depending on how much food is around. But this summer of 2013-14 is a breeding summer, which means it's a time for booming. How do I know this? Because the Kakapo on Codfish Island have just started to boom, around the same time that I was up on Magog – in mid November. From what I already knew about the Kakapo, I assumed that they boomed all night long, and this had left me a little confused.

The booming I'd heard, had only lasted about half an hour and wasn't continuous. But apparently they slowly work their way into it, and later on in the season they'll boom from dusk until dawn trying to attract a lady. Interesting. Curled up under a rock late that night in my sleeping bag, I lay awake, my mind spinning with thoughts. Could I really have heard a kakapo in the wild? What if by chance there is one left on mainland Rakiura?

Surprisingly, the Kakapo Recovery team has taken me seriously, and this month – when the kakapo should be booming all night long - they're going to head up to where I heard the noise and listen. IF there really is a lonely kakapo still out there, and IF they manage to track him down, what does this mean for the future of the kakapo species?

Considering that the only other bird that makes a booming noise is a bittern, which lives in a swamp, I'm 99% certain that I heard a kakapo. It's not swampy up on Magog. Call me crazy if you like, but it all seems a bit of a coincidence. After all, it's tiger

country down there, in a remote corner of wilderness rarely visited.

I spent more than a week in Pegasus, and 14 days after I said goodbye to the girls, I saw another person. It was another kayaker. I was quite shocked to see anyone. I was quite amused to see him running frantically up the steep track to a hut, closely followed by an angry sea lion. It turned out that Simon Meek had paddled around the whole of New Zealand in stages, so having a lot in common, we chatted nonstop for hours. It was nice to have some company, but the next morning I packed up and paddled towards the Tin Range. I wanted to sleep up there, but in the end I was feeling lazy and the cloud rolling in put me off.

As I paddled, a rather large, and angry sea lion chased me for about three kilometres, constantly slamming into my rudder. He flew out of the water, barking at me and showing me his big white teeth. I wasn't relaxed.

A few days later, with the forecast looking good for a run around South West Cape, I paddled out of Pegasus, bound for Broad Bay, just around the corner. I had underestimated the seriousness of this short stretch along the coast, and soon I was flying forwards at a speed of around seven kilometres per hour, despite a 15 knot headwind and a two metre south-west swell that I was paddling into. The swell was short and steep, the troughs close together. I paddled quickly.

I camped on a lonely beach under a full moon, the furthest south I'd ever been before. The only thing that stopped the whole setting from being perfect was a huge sea lion sleeping on a rocky island nearby. I'd snuck past, paddling slowly and quietly and pulled up onto the beach unnoticed. What disturbed me the most though, were the marks in the sand from what looked like a couple of very large sea lions. I was not at ease. But given that I had nowhere else to go, I had set up camp in the grasses above the high tide mark and tried to stay silent.

At 5 am next morning, I paddled away in the dim light, heading towards the coast. I was heading towards a place that had lingered in my mind for a long time. My imagination could not do it justice. Waves broke on the coast, throwing sheets of sea spray high into the sky. I kept my distance, slowly working my way south until I was about a kilometre offshore. Here, the waves and the swell were a little more consistent in their movements.

The sky was clear, but a thin band of cloud hung in the settled sky. I was still in the shadow of the mountains. The outgoing tide swept me towards South West Cape. The forecast was good - as good as I could have hoped for with only a two metre south-west swell and variable 10 knots of wind. A rare day at 47° south. But still, it was a powerful place with an immense amount of current whipping past the cape, and lines of huge standing and breaking waves.

I paused for a moment, turned my bow south, and paddled as fast as I could towards Antarctica. It wasn't until I was about three kilometres out to sea that I started to relax. The swell was still huge, and I was still being swept along, but the waves were not so steep and nothing was breaking. Diamonds of sunlight danced on the confused water. Overhead, a couple of sooty shearwaters glided past, their curiosity bringing them closer before they continued on their way into the sunrise. After years of dreaming about this wild and formidable place, I was finally here. I had paddled to the end of Aotearoa and I could paddle no further south. The sea, the land, everything about it was powerful.

Well clear of the cape, I turned north and slowly made my way in closer towards the coast. The swell slowly began to drop as I paddled further into the shelter of Big South Cape Island. Waves rolled gently and but my progress was slowed with the turning tide. I'd taken an educated guess at the tide times, calculated by a stick on the beach the evening before. As it turned out I'd probably hit



Sea lions lazing in the sun at Doughboy Bay

the cape half an hour before low. I'd hate to see that place on a bad day, mid tide. Maybe the conditions were not helped by the full moon?

The sky was clear and cloudless, there was no wind and I was still alone. I had only seen one boat in the distance since leaving Port Adventure weeks before. The Titi Islands spanned the ocean to the west, steep sided and covered in thick scrub. I'd wanted to land on them but they are off limits to non Rakiura Maori. The islands are full of life during the muttonbird harvest in autumn each year, when the fluffy young sooty shearwaters are plucked from their burrows. But on this beautiful day the islands looked deserted.

With strong westerly winds for the next couple of days, I decided to keep going and after nearly 12 hours of paddling, I landed onto the wide sandy beach at Doughboy Bay. Although the bay is accessible overland, I was still alone. That is, apart from the sea lions lazing on the beach in the late afternoon sun.

I stripped off, ran and jumped into the warm ocean. I swam along, constantly scanning the water for any sign of sea lions. From what I'd seen of their mating sessions, I was 100% sure I didn't want to be a part of it. I wasn't sure what the best self-defense technique would be if one did decide to come close.

For three days I stayed in the bay, and for three days I saw no one. It was perfect. Lucky I am a loner. I cranked up the potbelly stove in the

hut and baked chocolate cake in my tiny cast iron pot.

From Doughboy Bay I paddled for about 55 kms around the top of the Rakiura. The sea was messy with a south-west and north-west swell, and a 15 knot westerly wind. I passed the long sandy beach at Masons Bay, keeping well offshore, away from the surf. I camped that night on a huge sandy beach facing towards Foveaux Strait. I spent a few days chilling out, fishing and lying in the sun at Yankee River Hut. I also encountered my first trampers in a very long time.

A group of Australian trampers sharing the hut were shocked that I was eating cheese that was a month old. "It's not mouldy! It only smells a bit funky," I told them in my defense. How sheltered and conformed are our lives that anything left out of a fridge for more than 12 hours is deemed unhealthy? I resented having shared my blue cod fillets with them the night before, probably the freshest fish they'd ever eaten – 30 minutes from the sea to the pan. You should have seen their looks of disgust when I cooked up some of

Doughboy Hut, with a wooden gate to keep sea lions out of the hut.



the left-over fillets the next day for lunch. At least a possum trapper named Milton was appreciative of my catch. His eyes had lit up as he watched me empty the fish from my catch bag ready to fillet. I happily traded some fillets for a boiled potato, some cabbage and a boiled venison sausage. It was the first fresh vegetables I'd eaten in a month and they tasted good.

From Christmas Village Hut, I climbed up Mt Anglem, and survived a raging hurricane on the summit. Well at least I think it was the summit. All I could think about was how much my toes stung in the cold. I wished I had shoes.

When the weather cleared a few days later, I paddled into Oban for the night, completing the loop. I had a feed, stocked up on some veges and fruit, and next morning set off again, back around the corner. For four days I waited for the winds to drop, and then set off across the strait, aiming for the faint outline of Bluff Hill in the distance. It was a glassy crossing, and the swell was tame. Six hours later, after being swept way left, and then back right with the tide, I made my way into Bluff Harbour.

Rakiura had made me feel alive. It brought me closer to nature than I have felt in a long time. I walked on beaches with pure white sand so fine that it squeaked under my feet. I saw the first of the flowers emerge from the flax, a splash of colour marking the arrival of summer. I watched a group of tuis gorging themselves on the nectar, and I heard the shrieking calls of the kiwi on countless nights. I paddled by hundreds, if not thousands of squawking little blue and Fiordland crested penguins. I had survived five weeks in sea lion territory and they hadn't eaten me. It was the best trip I had ever done and I was stoked. Rakiura, the land of the glowing skies. What a magical place. Tara Mulvany

(see also the photogallery on Tara's website for more colour photos: www.tarasjourneys.com)

TECHNICAL

Paddle Leashes By Sandy Winterton

If you're in a kayak away from assistance and lose your paddle, you are up poo creek. Not a good place to be.

There are a few things that can be done about this. As ever, the best solution is prevention, but we will set this aside for now and look first at what can be done after the event.

Loss of a paddle will probably occur because of wind or a capsized due to waves, rapids, or contact with another object. Losing a paddle is unlikely to happen when paddling on flat water. Having said that, when stopping to do something that requires both hands such taking a photo, paddles have been known to swim off and appear quite a way from the boat. In flat water you can hand paddle (best done with both hands dipping simultaneously) to regain it. In waves though, it's no easy matter to stay upright.

Alternatively you can use the spare split paddle you have stowed on board. Can you get at it, assemble and use it? I wonder how many people try this, especially with equipment strapped on deck that could get in the way. In any significant waves, even this is going to be a difficult task. Those far-sighted souls who keep their split paddle easily accessible on the foredeck may one day reap their reward.

Failure to regain your paddle or deploy your spare in rough conditions puts you at serious risk. In John Kirk-Anderson's mnemonic for kayak safety, the first letter is A for Avoid. Avoid getting into the situation to start with, i.e. don't lose your paddle in the first place. To prevent a loss happening, you can use a paddle leash to keep the paddle secured so it can't float off or get blown away.

You *could* attach the paddle to yourself e.g. to your PFD, but this is not

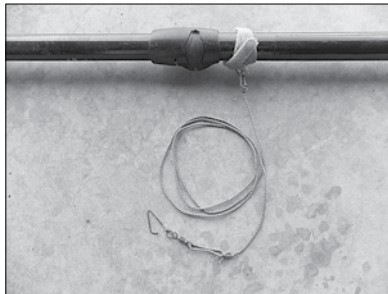
recommended for normal sea kayaks. In any breeze your boat can be blown away if you lose contact with it for even a moment. A paddle attached to you will hamper your swimming after it enormously and there's a real risk you will not regain your kayak at all.

You should attach the paddle leash to the boat so the two will not become separated. If you come out of your boat, you should always hang on to your paddle and will therefore retain contact with the kayak.

The simplest paddle leash is a piece of string. Tie one end of the string around the centre of the paddle shaft and the other to something on the foredeck of the kayak. There are three problems with this:

- the string has to be quite long to allow for all normal paddle manoeuvres, and can catch on things
- it could be difficult to untie a knot in a hurry if you had to release the paddle
- if you had to do a paddle float rescue, the line could restrict paddle position or get in the way.

A slightly more advanced leash can be made with some suitable cord and a Velcro cable tie. These have holes to tie the line to and have Velcro hooks one side and fluff on the other. The largest size is long enough to wrap twice round the paddle shaft. To attach to the boat, a knot is OK, but a good quality fishing swivel with a clip holds well and discourages twists in the line.



*Simple leash for fishing kayak paddle
Below: An Olive (cleat)*



Stretchy coiled paddle leash

A common type of purchased leash has a coiled plastic section. The coiling means that the leash may be as short as 0.5 m long but can be stretched to about 1.7 m or more to allow movement of the paddle. The end to attach to the boat generally has a loop and the paddle end commonly has a Velcro arrangement that is firm but which could be released in an emergency. Some people find these leashes heavy and they tend to be quite noisy, clattering on the deck of the boat, and again they can catch on things.

An alternative mentioned in a KASK article by Dave Winkworth (issue 151, Feb-Mar 2011) is a simple length of shock cord with a jamming device to attach the paddle. These little gizmos go by various names (Dave calls them olives) and are available in marine suppliers and sometimes in cycling shops where they are used to tension bungies. Knots either side of the olive keep it from sliding off. Because the shock cord is stretchy, it can be kept quite short, and if a similar cleat is used at the boat end as an attachment, the length can be varied. Olives can be quickly released if a paddle float rescue is required.

Shock cord and olive paddle leash





Leg leash for sit-on-top kayaks

A related matter relevant to sit on top kayaks is that you can also attach the paddler to the boat. This is recommended for surf skis, sit on tops and stand up paddle boards.

If you fall off, you are attached to your craft, usually by way of a leg leash attached below the knee which links to a convenient point on the boat. Typically there is a firm fastening to the boat and a quick release at the leg attachment, just in case you need to get free e.g. if the boat might be tumbled in big surf. Bought ones usually have the coiled plastic used on paddle leashes. The example above is home-brewed.

The leg strap is wide webbing with a Velcro fastening. It has about 1 m of shock cord and has a dyneema line for strength about 1.7 m long, folded and cable tied in such a way that will allow it to deploy if the shock cord is stretched. A leg leash needs to be long enough to allow a capsized paddler to float in a standing position next to the kayak, ready to remount.

The problem with this system is that you can still be separated from your paddle, and if you're tied to your boat, the chances of swimming after it are slim. Most schools of thought agree that if you're going to be in the water awaiting rescue, it's better to be without a paddle than without the boat. For sit-on-top craft, a leg leash is a good solution. However, for sit-ins, it is not recommended that you attach person to boat while paddling. Line of any sort inside the boat could tangle legs while trying to exit. If you're in the water and need to stay

with your boat for a long period, you can attach at that stage.

Many sit-on-top paddlers, in particular kayak anglers, should use a paddle leash as well as a leg leash. While fishing, the paddle is left unattended for long periods and really needs to be secured. It's rare to see a spare paddle carried on a sit-on-top which makes keeping paddle #1 even more important.

Didier Plouhinec is a very inventive surf ski and kayak paddler from France who has modified, adapted and invented dozens of things to improve his paddling safety, comfort and convenience. He uses a lightweight retainer of 4 mm shock cord that does not fasten to the boat but to the paddler. One end has a fixed loop that slips snugly over the shaft of his split paddle, the other end passes through a tight loop in its own end. This end fits over the left wrist, the loop is drawn up and two sleeves of plastic tubing are slid up as keepers to maintain the wrist loop at the right tension to stay put. Since he also wears a leg leash, Didier can never become separated from his boat or his paddle.

Didier's blog (mainly in French) is one of the most comprehensive paddling blogs you'll find with over 400 entries including lots of trip reports, equipment trials, photos and fixes. Web address on photo credit below.

Sandy Winterton

Plouhinec leash Photo by Didier Plouhinec from his blog site <http://dplouepic.skyrock.com/3147444144-Dragonne-ultra-legere-de-pagaie.html>

Plouhinec leash



Paddle Leashes by Kevin Dunsford

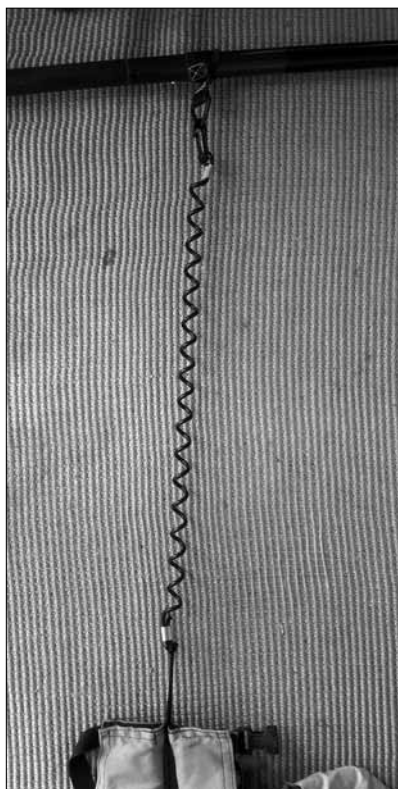
There are two sorts of sea kayakers, those who come from river kayaking and those who start kayaking in the sea. River kayakers only let go their paddles when they throw them up on the bank when landing. I have seen sea kayakers do this when landing on the beach. I know they haven't yet had a paddle smashed by a wave-swept loaded-kayak. The nearest I come to this sort of behaviour is removing my paddle leash before landing, well out before encountering any possible surf. About the only other occasion I release the paddle leash is when entering sea caves. Paddles break too easily and I could get caught in the leash. In all other situations I always have the paddle leashed.

There are various theories on paddle leashes. My method is not mainstream. I have a coiled paddle leash from the lower front of my inflatable PDF, clipped to a strapping-loop around the centre of the paddle shaft. I have lost count of the kayakers (who often came from river kayaking) who have expressed the opinion that this is downright dangerous but I have my reasons, and I've tested them too. Here they are:

I don't want to lose another \$400 paddle. The last one I lost while

Kevin's paddle leash (flacid!)





Kevin's leash extended

landing a kingi after I had taken the paddle leash off as a precaution because I was close to rocks. Now I leave it clipped, especially while fishing. When I need the paddle for balancing, I know exactly where it will always be.

I also don't want to lose the paddle if I get separated from my kayak close to shore. Clipped to the kayak it goes with the kayak and that includes it getting surfed or tumbled ashore, probably damaging the paddle.

I particularly don't want to lose the paddle if I get separated from my kayak offshore. Why would I want a paddle at sea without a kayak? Firstly, lying on my back, with an inflated PFD, I can paddle forward at about 1.5 knots for quite a while. Try it! It is much more efficient than swimming, that's why we use a paddle with a kayak. Second and even more importantly, my paddle has blades of red-orange on one side and reflectors on the other. Being over two metres long - or high if I'm in the water - it is very useful to attract attention or to dissuade fizz boat skippers from running me down (if they happen to be keeping a lookout).

When choosing a paddle leash, it is important that it can be easily unclipped. It should not be so strong that you cannot break it in an emergency. Coiled is good, as it is only as long as you need it to be at all times and it has a bit of elasticity to prevent sudden shocks, but not so much as to become a projectile on the rebound. Keep away from metal bits if possible, they corrode, get stiff and can make an irritating noise banging against gear.

Get into the habit of always using your paddle leash. That way clipping and unclipping becomes automatic. I don't put to sea without being clipped on now. Whichever paddle leash method you use, think out the various outcomes - and put them to the test. Consider carefully other people's opinions but don't bet your life on them.

Mike Scanlan's paddle leash



Paddle Leashes by Mike Scanlan

The seatbelt in my Subaru is a bit of a nuisance, but one day it may save my life and I use it every time I drive. Same with my (paddle to kayak) paddle leash.

If you want to wind me up, start a conversation in my hearing about paddle leashes being unnecessary/dangerous.

My current paddle leash (see photo at left) is by far the best I have had. It is a 'Seattle Paddle Leash' obtainable online from Canoe & Kayak for \$35.

It is stretchable to 8 feet, thin and lightweight so it doesn't bang onto the deck too much, has a Kevlar core, and heavy duty clips at both ends.

Previous leashes made of solid plastic have broken after a few years exposure to UV etc. They may still look OK but be weak.

A word for people who paddle in groups and depend on others for their safety - when the weather turns really bad everyone becomes a solo paddler.

Paddle Leashes by Tara Mulvany

Basically the only time I will tie my paddle on is in big surf or on a very rough day on the sea. By that I mean a short piece of cord clipped onto my lifejacket. From my experience, it helps when swimming through big surf, holding onto the kayak's stern grab loop whilst being dragged face first behind your kayak. I have only done this once, when the surf at Hokitika claimed me and I was very thankful to have my paddle tied on. Ginney Deavoll swears by them though. In fact I have never seen her paddle without one!

Overseas Reports

Jason Beachcroft Around Australia

(<http://jasonbeachcroft.com>)

On 28 January, Jason Beachcroft reached Fowlers Bay at the eastern end of the Great Australian Bight.

He completed his third overnighter along the 186 km (116 miles) long Bunda Cliffs by 15 January which means he has now knocked off the three sets of long cliffs, the Zuytdorp, Baxters and now the Bunda Cliffs. This overnighter took Jason 35 hours, and he noted 15 knot headwinds from 5 pm to 5 am, lots of playful dolphins during both night and day, and one shark about four foot long.

Jason left Sydney Harbour on 12 January 2013, and is paddling around Australia – including Tasmania – unsupported and he is not using a sail. When Jason paddles back into Sydney Harbour, he will have completed a significant circumnavigation as neither myself, Freya Hoffmeister nor Stuart Trueman have paddled around Tasmania.

Despite overcoming that third set of cliffs, Jason had several more days

of nasty surf landing before reaching the first sheltered landing in weeks, at Fowlers Bay. During one of his recent landings, he broke several ribs in the surf. Now heading east from Fowlers Bay, Jason has more opportunities for lee landings through to Adelaide.

Freya Around South America (<http://freyahoffmeister.com/freyas-blog/>)

Before Xmas, Freya rang for a catch up related some of the highlights and lowlights of the last stage of her South American circumnavigation. That last stage, was around the top northern section of the continent and it finished at Georgetown in Guyana. She found headwinds, mud flats, paddling into a current and the heat/humidity were punishing on her body.

In Ecuador Freya was paddling across a bay with production oil rigs, and half an hour spent paddling through a slick or spill of crude oil left her kayak in a terrible mess. She said soap and water was useless to remove the oil. Petrol was the only means of cleaning the mess, and fortunately she was helped by fishermen in a nearby village.

Late one night Freya had a rude awakening on a sandy beach when it felt like someone was breaking through the walls of her self-sup-

porting tent. It wasn't sex-starved local natives but a massive marine turtle that wanted to lay eggs in a pit beside her tent.

I was intrigued to hear Freya state that she felt being a woman on this South America trip was a distinct advantage. When Ed Gillette was paddling up the West Coast of South America some 20 years ago, he was only 400 miles from Panama Canal when after the 2nd robbery by locals of his passport, camera and money, he felt his survival was more important than paddling those last 400 miles. But Freya said that on shore or on the water, she would see a mob of surly males approaching and once they realized she was a woman, it was all smiles and interest in what she was doing.

Freya noted her closest shave to disaster was on the last day paddling into Georgetown. She was paddling up a river into the port against a strong current. Passing the (upstream) bow of a big cargo vessel, she was strongly directed to the shore but her long kayak was swept onto the bow, just like an entrapment on a rock in a river. It was apparently a desperate situation, which luckily she and her kayak both survived.

After a northern winter break in Germany, Freya resumed paddling from Georgetown on 10 January. She had aimed to complete her trip back into Buenos Aires by her 50th birthday on 10 May this year.

By 22 January, Freya was nearly past Surinam with only Guiana and Brazil to go before re-entering Argentina, however strict visa requirements for Brazil – three months in country, three months out before a visa can be renewed – will not allow her birthday finish to be met.

Reading the last few days of her blog, Freya is dealing with extensive mud flats, surf and having to work high tides for landing (and camping) and launching. I get the feeling she is finding the going tough.

An official send off crew for Jason at Eucla, before he began the overnighter along the Bunda Cliffs. Stuart Trueman experienced difficulty with the authorities when he was attempting the cliffs. For Jason, the local Police shouted him drinks and dinner, and really tried to look after him.



Sri Lanka

(www.paddlesrilanka.com)

On 18 December 2013, two West Australian paddlers launched from Colombo (West Coast of Sri Lanka) with an ambitious plan to circumnavigate the former island of Ceylon. A logo/banner on their rather well designed website noted: '1200 km 50 km/day 3 weeks'. With four rest days scheduled, the daily planned paddling average was 53 kms (33 miles per day). Ian Pexton and Dave Rowlands claimed on their website, respectively 15 and 20 years of sea kayaking and expedition experience. Dave had soloed the Zuytdorp Cliffs (south to north) and claimed a 'south west cape of New Zealand paddle'.

A question for readers – does New Zealand in fact have a South West Cape? Puysegur Point is the south-western tip of New Zealand, but there is a South West Cape at the southern end of Stewart Island.

Despite those years of experience, I felt Peter and Dave's timetable was rather ambitious and so it was to prove when the boys pulled the pin on day 21, blaming weather, seasickness, slow progress and both family and job responsibilities at home, with barely half of the distance around the island paddled.

With obvious detailed planning, an enviable list of sponsors, and so much help from the Sri Lankan Army and Navy, the fact that Dave and Peter did not set an achievable daily paddling average (25 miles per day instead of 33) is something I struggle to fathom why.

However Sandy Robson (<http://sandy-robson.com>) now has no competition for achieving a Sri Lanka circuit, after which her Stage 3 plan is to paddle up the east coast of India to near the border with Bangladesh (March to June 2014, 3,100 kms). Sandy recently advised she has received permission from India for her trip and the Sri Lankan navy is discussing giving her an escort on their side. Sandy flies into India 25 February and hopes to paddle to Sri Lanka about 1 March.

France to Istanbul

3,000 miles from the Atlantic to the Black Sea

(www.canoeingthecontinent.com)

The two British paddlers, James Warner Smith and Nathan Wilkins, began their ambitious voyage in Nantes, on the Atlantic coast of France, with the goal of reaching Istanbul by connecting waterways across Europe without portaging. Up until the last three weeks of their voyage, accomplishing this mission seemed promising: 'On our entire crossing of Europe, our longest portage between waterways was 25 meters, from one side of a campsite to the other!' reported Warner Smith in early November.

However, upon reaching the Black Sea the two paddlers were at the mercy of November gales, contending with terrible weather, massive waves and rocky headlands. Concerned for their safety, they abandoned their canoe and took to the remaining 370 kilometres on foot, paddles in hand. "We were very sad to leave the canoe behind," says Warner Smith. "We had dreamed of canoeing through the Bosphorus into Istanbul, however, we felt there was a certain inevitability to our decision, given the forecast and the conditions."

Their 146-day journey took Warner Smith and Wilkins through a variety of landscapes, including untouched rivers, historic canals, busy shipping rivers and one tumultuous Black Sea.

Sandy Robson



The two spent more than 2,000 kilometers on the Danube River alone, following its course through Austria, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania.

The two students, who met through running, were awarded a grant for the trip through the University of Warwick. Both agree that their athletic backgrounds allowed them to weather the physical demands of the trip relatively unscathed. "I originally got the idea for the trip after I canoed the Yukon River in 2010. I spent two weeks there in the wilderness and had the most fantastic canoeing experience. After that I was keen to do another big canoe trip but wanted something large-scale and original," says Warner Smith. He hatched the plan and Wilkins, who'd never put a paddle in the water before, was game. Back home now in England, Wilkins will soon be back in school finishing a law degree, while Warner Smith turns the expedition's blog into a resource for other paddlers looking to make their way across Europe by water. "It's only looking back, we've realized how incredible some of things we did were," adds Warner Smith. "At the time it was just a part of everyday life and seemed quite commonplace."

South America to Florida

(www.henrykayak.com/)

On 30 July 2013, Russell and Graham Henry departed Belem, Brazil and headed north-east to Florida, USA via kayak and over the past six months have paddled 1,500 miles along the inhospitable coast of South America, and island-hopped across the Caribbean from Trinidad to the Dominican Republic. After a holiday lay-over in the Dominican, they departed the morning of January 16 on the 90-mile crossing to the Turks and Caicos Islands. "After 10 days of waiting for the right winds, we are pulling the trigger and setting out on the longest crossing of the expedition," the brothers wrote on their blog, estimating the crossing will take about 30 hours.

BOOKS

NZ Sea Kayak Books The Circumnavigation Narratives

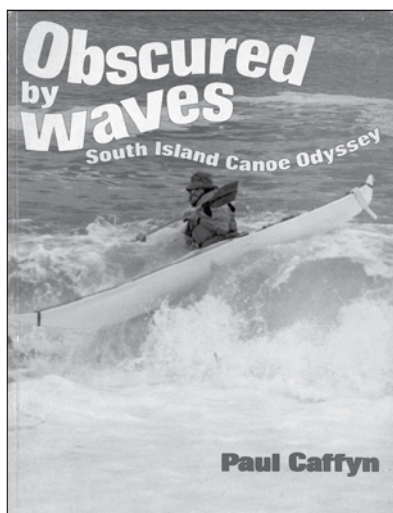
by Kerry Howe

South Island
(2,462kms, 1539 miles)

Paul Caffyn, *Obscured by Waves. South Island Canoe Odyssey*, John McIndoe, Dunedin, 1979; Second revised edition, *Obscured by waves. South Island kayak odyssey*, Kayak Dundee Press, 2005.

In 1977 Paul Caffyn and Max Reynolds set off from Te Waewae Bay intending to paddle the Fiordland coast only. But after that Paul completed the circumnavigation solo [total 75 days]. Not only was it a magnificent achievement in its own right, but it inspired a generation (and more) of New Zealand and overseas sea kayakers to head off with a tent even if only for a few days of subsistence coastal living.

In those days sea kayaking was a little known activity in New Zealand. Paul put it on the radar. His trip and book were truly inspirational. He showed the possibilities of independent travel to remote spots with minimalist equipment, and that struck a particular chord with the baby boom generation entranced by the idea of simple living with nature.



And of course it also inspired those who wanted to do similar extreme trips, though not until many years later were some of his long distance feats emulated.

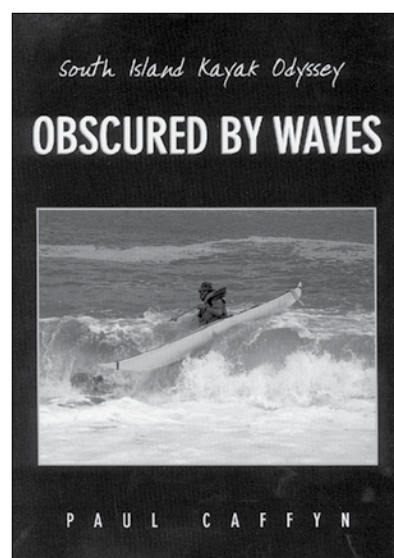
Paul came from a climbing, tramping, caving background. His book was a refined derivative of classic outdoors trip reports in that it gave a comprehensive blow by blow, day by day narrative. You feel you are there – you can envisage the sea conditions, the scenery, the gales, the calms, the horrendous surf breakouts and landings. You learn all about techniques and organization and gear, and maritime history and all the beauties and hazards of the natural world – from cuddly looking seals to sandflies and sharks. Prodigious research went into writing the narrative, and the result is an invaluable how-to handbook, as well as a riveting tale of adventure. There's a lot of humour, and atrocious puns.

You meet the most amazing range of people, including the now obsolete lighthouse keepers. The assistance and camaraderie of farmers and fisherman and others is heart warming. And you ride the emotional roller coaster from joy in idyllic conditions to the terror of life threatening winds and waves.

Paul revealed a coastal landscape and sea conditions about which most of us had little knowledge, especially Fiordland, but also for much of the rest of the shoreline as well. Unlike yachting narratives, sea kayaking involves a much more intimate relationship with the coast, and it certainly gives a perspective on our country quite unlike the view gained from the land. Sea kayakers now take all this for granted, but back in the 1970s it was pretty radical knowledge.

Overall what comes through is Paul's sheer courage and determination particularly as he deals with the terrors of big surf.

It is instructive in retrospect to realize just how simple was his equipment. His Nordkapp sea kayak had no rudder or built in skeg, though

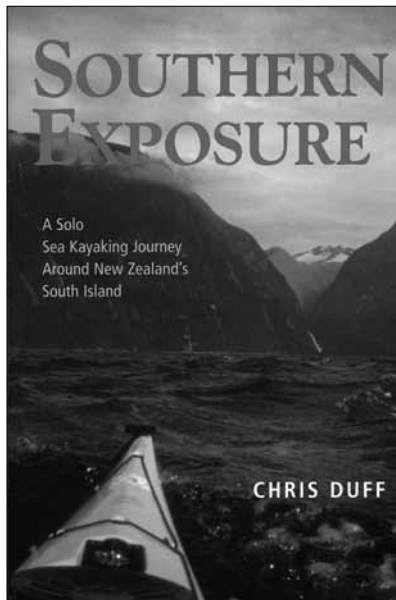


he did construct a clunky home made slip-on skeg. These were the days before portable VHF radios, cell phones for communications and plotter apps, GPS, EPIRBs, satellite phones, wall to wall marine weather forecasting, and Google Earth – things that we now take for granted. His contact with any shore parties was generally by flashing mirrors or car lights. It was seat of the pants but it was not reckless. He demonstrated how good planning, good organization, and good judgement combined with sheer determination made a seemingly impossible trip possible. It's the person, not the equipment that matters.

The second revised edition, especially the hardback copy, is a most beautiful production, lots of new photos, and clear, detailed maps.

Chris Duff, *Southern Exposure. A solo sea kayaking journey around New Zealand's South Island*, Falcon, 2003.

Where Paul Caffyn had relatively little sea kayak experience when he set off in 1977, Chris Duff was very experienced for his circumnavigation in 1999/2000. He'd sea kayaked much of the Canadian and US coastline, and had been first to solo circumnavigate the whole of the UK. He had also been a US naval diver for seven years. He started from Picton, and went clockwise. He was the fourth person after Paul to complete the circumnavigation (after Bevan Walker in 1991 and Brian Roberts in 1996).



Chris's book is quite literary. He was already an experienced author having written a most beautiful account of his trip around Ireland - *On Celtic Tides* (1999).

Southern Exposure is not a day by day report but more a reflective, even psychological, account of his journey. He compresses or omits details of some of the less notable sections of coastline. Almost half of the book covers his Fiordland passage, which does have a detailed narrative.

As for many other paddlers, Fiordland fascinates, yet also threatens. He had rotten weather there, and had at least two extreme incidents. He came within a whisker of being blown off shore and to certain death by storm force winds. Just north of Milford Sound, when caught by bad weather, he was forced to land on a jagged shore through murderous surf. His sea kayak was pretty well demolished. But he was very lucky. A call on his VHF radio (with almost dead batteries) was picked up and he was rapidly rescued, along with his battered kayak, by helicopter from Milford Sound. He managed to get it repaired (again the assistance by New Zealanders was amazing) and he continued on.

Chris has not just a mental toughness (required by all long distance paddlers) but he has the capacity to stand outside himself and analyse his mental state in extreme conditions

— almost as if he has two personas, which may be a result of his rigorous naval dive training. He is very conscious of his consciousness. His tale of being dragged upside down in massive surf before he smashed his kayak is a masterful account of his near physical panic trying to hold his breath tempered by a cold, detached analytical voice calmly informing him to hang on a bit longer before attempting to roll.

Throughout the book, there are inspired, reflective sections on what the sea means to him.

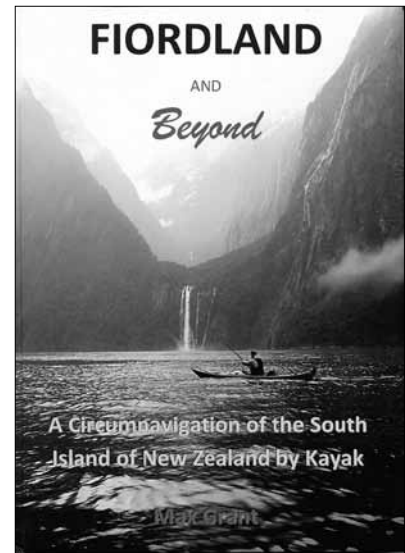
There are good maps and there is an insert section of colour photographs.

Max Grant, *Fiordland and Beyond. A circumnavigation of the South Island of New Zealand by Kayak*, 2013.

Max Grant, well known New Zealand kayaker and owner of Q-Kayaks Ltd, and his daughter, Melanie, completed the circumnavigation over several years 2007-2010, picking off large sections of the coast as time and opportunity permitted [total 71 paddling days].

Max, Melanie and others in the family had explored parts of Fiordland previously and had become enthralled, if not obsessed, with the region. So the initial plan in 2007 was for Max and Melanie to sea kayak the whole of the Fiordland coast, starting at Jackson Bay, and that was all. Well we've heard that story before. Eventually they went right around the South Island. They travelled anti-clockwise, unlike Paul Caffyn, Brian Roberts and Chris Duff.

Max's account very much reflects his own personality — he is modest, unassuming, down to earth, and rock solid. Having sea kayaked with him many years ago, I would trust him with my life in tight spots. Thus is his narrative very simple, straightforward, and very accessible. He never plays down the serious situations (and there are some pretty dangerous times) but nor does he inflate them. Rather, they are described without fuss, and with few adjectives. Max is



not into literary dramatics.

Yet at the same time the account is suffused with his enthusiasms, passions and worries. A dad paddling with his daughter must always feel concerned and protective, even though, in Melanie's case, she was just as sea kayaked skilled as her dad. But overall there was a family purpose. Max's son/ Melanie's brother, Steven, had died young of cancer. The circumnavigation was to raise funds for Child Cancer. As Max writes, it was 'a journey deeper and more involved than simply paddling a kayak 2,750 kilometres.'

So Melanie became the youngest woman and first New Zealand woman to paddle right round the South Island, Max became the oldest person.

The book is very nicely produced and with high quality colour photos (usually 3-4 to every opened page) it is by far the best illustrated sea kayak trip narrative that I have yet seen.

Summary

All the South Island circumnavigators faced similar perils, though not always in the same places. Fiordland seems to have made the deepest impression on them all. They met many of the same people, and all encountered great New Zealand hospitality. All showed remarkable courage and fortitude.

There is no best account. All three books provide a wealth of information often from different perspectives. Even if you never get into a

sea kayak, read all three and be informed, entertained, and amazed.

But the one that has made and still makes the deepest impact has to be Paul Caffyn's since he was the very first. It took almost 20 years for others to follow successfully. Also he is a strong and acknowledged presence in the narratives of both Chris Duff and Max Grant as their inspirer, advisor, mentor, practical and moral supporter.

North Island (2,780kms 1737.5 miles)

Paul Caffyn, *Cresting the Restless Waves. North Island kayak odyssey, New Zealand Canoeing Association and Paul Caffyn, 1987.*

Having done the South Island it was virtually inevitable he'd do the North Island.

The unaware might think that going round the North Island is easier than the South Island – it should be warmer, calmer, have fewer kilometres of extreme coast, and have more inhabited shorelines. Wrong. The North Island's best kept secret is its rotten summer weather - invariably windy, and often with storm battered, barren coasts. It is no coincidence that so far there have been only 3 sea kayak circumnavigations of the North Island whereas there have been 11 of the South Island.

Paul's account follows the model he established for his South Island book – a detailed daily account of his progress (or lack of), interspersed with local history and colour. In 1978 Paul started at Makara. This time he intended to do the clockwise circumnavigation all in one go. In this he was ably assisted by a devoted (if always cheeky, sometimes even merciless) shore party of Lesley Hadley and Bruce Annabell, plus Ben the dog.

For the whole of the west coast Paul was hammered by high winds. He experienced bigger swells and tougher and more massive surf than on his South Island trip. There were long periods ashore, including a week's refuge in Patea. It is a har-

rowing account of running an unforgiving coast. The trip down the supposedly calmer east coast was plagued first by a tropical cyclone, then high offshore, and debilitating head winds. Then there were seriously fraught efforts to round Cape Palliser. To complete the trip there was the small matter of paddling home across Cook Strait from Makara [total trip 86 days].

Leaving aside the trip as such, I think this is a better book than his first. It seems more focussed, and more assured as a narrative. There is now so much that he does not have to say since he already has a prepared readership with his first book.

Stewart Island

Paul Caffyn, *Dark Side of the Wave. Stewart Island kayak odyssey, New Zealand Canoeing Association, 1987.*

OK – so now that left Stewart Island. For most of us it is a roundish blob on the map below the South Island. In fact it has a complex, indented coastline with unique granite landscapes and wildlife, wicked rips, and highly changeable weather (from bad to worse to dangerous).

Paul paddled across Foveaux Strait (the first ever sea kayak crossing) and around the island with his old mate Max Reynolds in the winter of 1979, shortly after his North Island odyssey. At the time it was the most southerly sea kayak trip made anywhere on the planet.

This is a little gem of a little book. Apart from the expected and unexpected details of the sea kayaking itself, it captures the essence of an island that everyone has heard of, but most have never been to. It is also Paul's tribute to Max who drowned some months later.

And it brings closure to Paul's New Zealand's 'big trips.' So he then went on to 'do' Australia, Britain, Japan, New Caledonia, Greenland, Phuket.

Kerry Howe - January 2014

OBITUARIES

Maggie Oakley by Paul Caffyn

Dunedin paddler Maggie Oakley passed away on 9 December 2013 after a long battle with cancer. Maggie was one of those wonderful Kiwis whose heart and soul was into paddling rivers, lakes and the sea.

In 2002, Maggie's was awarded 'Canoeist of the Year' by Whitewater New Zealand in recognition of her 30 years contribution to paddling. I have drawn much of the material for this tribute from Sue Abbott's write up of the 2002 award and also from a 'Paddler Profile' that Maggie wrote for *The Sea Canoeist Newsletter* No. 138 December 2008 - January 2009.

In her profile, Maggie wrote:

'So long, long ago - in my mid 20s, enjoying my career as a home birth midwife, in the market town of Norwich, England, I was an unlikely candidate for any outdoor adventures. The very idea of a woman kayaking was entirely novel to me until I read Constance Helmericks's book *Down the Wild River North*. She recounted a two-year journey she undertook with her teenage daughters, aged 12 and 14, when they paddled through Canada on the Peace and Mackenzie rivers to the Arctic. Growing up in post-war Britain, I had neither notion of 'wilderness' nor had I seen a kayak. This canoeing book was an awakening. Constance was some woman - she was unlike any woman I had ever met or read about.

Maggie first started paddling with her husband Rod in 1973 on the Rangitikei River in the North Island. Her first kayak was an old fashioned double bought from a local farmer. Maggie joined the Palmerston North Canoe Club in 1974 and after moving to Otago in 1977, she joined the Otago Canoe and Kayak Club.

Since 1977 Maggie was involved with the club committee in various roles, including five years as Con-



Maggie Oakley. Photo: Paul Caffyn

servation Officer. Maggie canvassed club members for support against various resource consent applications mainly on the rivers of Otago but also of the South Island. She has networked with others involved in conservation around the region such as Fish & Game, District Council Members, Ngai Tahu.

When Maggie started paddling in 1977, it was not that common to see women paddling either whitewater or on the sea, and despite being busy with raising a family and full time employment, she kept up her paddling. Maggie organized club trips for both whitewater and sea and lakes, also river safety course and first aid courses. Over the years she has been an inspiration for women of all ages to take up paddling.

*Sue, Jan and Maggie off Nugget Point in February 2013.
The Nugget Point lighthouse in the background.*



Maggie's first sea kayaking trip was in south Otago: 'With a friend and my son, we set out on a three-day trip paddling up the Catlins coast in south Otago. In three heavily laden river kayaks (*Dancers*), we started out from Tautuku Bay. While heading out to sea, we passed five large fishing boats coming the opposite way into the bay. Within a few hours a fast moving southerly storm caught us. Unfortunately, high sheer cliffs obstructed our swift retreat to safety. Much later, after landing onto a rocky shore, we had time to reflect on what we did not know about sea kayaking. Safely back home, I subscribed to *Sea Kayaker* magazine and started saving for a sea kayak. My next foray out to sea in 1993 was in a bright yellow *Nordkapp*. I was considerably better informed - but not yet skilled.'

Maggie contributed articles for the KASK newsletter on her Southland lake paddles, in particular her favourite, Lake Hauroko:

It is long and skinny, tending north to south. It has a bad reputation for severe winds. And while this reputation is warranted, it does not pose such a threat in a kayak. Either the wind is so strong I cannot make any headway into it, so I get off the lake and make camp, or find a DoC hut instead. Or the wind is with me, providing fantastic following waves, I fly with great exhilaration to my destination.

Maggie and I were both diagnosed

with cancer back in 2012 and we swapped emails of how we were doing with treatment. In March 2013 Maggie sent photos and short notes about some of her favourite paddling destinations, including a birthday 'party' in the huge sea caves north of Dunedin, and a February 2013 trip when Maggie joined Sue and Jan for a paddle from Kaka Point out around Nugget Point (see photo below).

In my view, the term 'heart of gold' applied to Maggie. She was not only just into paddling for the enjoyment and thrills, but also put so much energy into encouraging young 'uns' to take up paddling and also conserve the pristine lakes and rivers of Otago and Southland. To her husband Rod, her family, club paddling mates and KASK members who knew Maggie, the expression 'sadly missed' is most appropriate. She was 'some woman'

Percy Blandford by Alan Bye

Percy was a leading light in the Scouting movement. He died age 101. If you want some idea of the huge range of his achievements look up his record of books on Amazon.com.

My interest in him is personal. I met him several times at Earl's Court in London when the Boat Show was there, and later at Crystal Palace where the Canoeing and Kayaking expo was held each February. I asked him to sign one of his books *Canoes and Canoeing* - I have it here now.

My intro to canoeing was to build a PBK 20 (Percy Blandford Kayak) in autumn 1957. It was launched 11/01/1958. The construction was laths on marine plywood frames covered by canvas. Later I sailed it, because in anything above a whisper breeze, it went downwind because of its windage. I made the sails and spars, gunter rig and foresail, fitted a drop keel through the hull and sailed it on deep water in strong winds and my daughter (age 6) cried excitedly, "Faster Daddy faster!" I was hanging over the weather side hoping the lee gunwale would not be driven under.

One by one as the years rolled on I developed an awareness of the need for safety, using the adage Dad gave me, "If it was necessary to know everything before attempting anything, nothing would ever be done." I recall Percy with gratitude now - he gave me the push that set me off on deep waters.

1968 - 1973, I was Warden of the Riverside Centre in Oxford UK. The first year I camped in the centre in a tent in the workshop. Saturdays and Sundays were busy times, so my weekend was from 6 pm on Sunday to 10 am Wednesday. On the way home, 95 miles, I found a fast road through Stratford on Avon. A mile or two before the bridge over the Avon I passed a solitary group of buildings close to the river. There was a house, a farmyard, barn, various small buildings and a boat frame on stocks. Percy lived there. One Sunday evening I turned in to the yard and knocked on the door. Percy invited me in and we talked for half an hour.

That was the last time I saw him, in 1968. His influence caused me to change my life from a desk bound pen pusher to one who knows what 'awesome' really means.

Percy Blandford - Obituary *The Telegraph*

Percy Blandford was a canoe designer who got Britain boating going with his post-war do-it-yourself designs in the period of austerity that followed the Second World War. He died aged 101.

Percy was the author of 113 books on subjects as diverse as making Shaker furniture; blacksmithing at home; wood-turning; knots and ropework; upholstery; country craft tools; and farm machinery. His principal interest, however, was designing canoes and other small boats; and his blueprints for home-built craft allowed thousands of enthusiasts, who would otherwise have been unable to afford the experience, to get out on the water.

The most popular of his small craft were his canoes (some 30 different designs) and the Lysander, a 17ft trailer-sailer. His biggest boat was a 24ft yacht. In his home-built craft, Blandford became a useful canoe racer in his own right, narrowly failing to qualify for the 1948 Olympics. Instead he was appointed a timekeeper and judge for the rowing and canoeing events, stationed at Henley. "There were five of us," he later recalled, "different nationalities, in a tiny box in the middle of the river. We got a signal from the starters and pressed our stopwatches."

The son of a grocer, Percy William Blandford was born in Bristol on October 26 1912. He was educated at Wells Road School in the city and became a trainee architect with PE Culverhouse, who rebuilt Bristol's Temple Meads station in the 1930s. Blandford later worked as a teacher, but soon decided that he could earn more money by writing.

Percy embarked on his canoe-designing odyssey in the late 1940s,

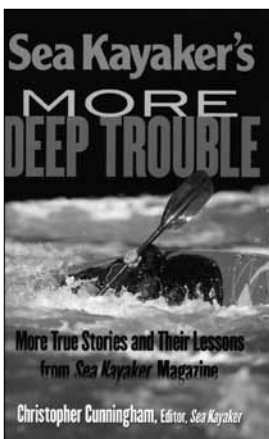
building his first craft from wood and shop blind canvas salvaged from bombsites. This was the PBK 10 (Percy Blandford Kayak 10ft). He then wrote comprehensive instructions and produced drawings that he offered for sale to the do-it-yourself market.

In the 1950s he qualified as a naval architect, and designed other boats, including small dinghies, trailer-sailers, yachts and cabin cruisers. By the mid-60s, surfing had arrived on the beaches of Britain, but surf boards from California were both expensive and hard to find. Blandford came up with a hollow, wooden surfboard that people could build themselves. In May 1965 his design was published in Boy's Own Paper under the headline: "Make your own super surf board for £4".

Percy Blandford had joined the Cub Scouts in 1920, the beginning of a lifetime's commitment to Scouting. In 2000, the movement had to create a unique award to mark his 80 years' continuous membership. He was a co-founder of the International Guild of Knot Tyers and of the Canoe Camping Club, a forerunner of the British Canoe Union, the ruling body for canoeing in Britain. His marriage, in 1938, to Ivy Harris was followed by a honeymoon on which they toured the Thames by canoe. His wife died in 2002, and their son predeceased him in 2006.



Percy Blandford in his Scout's uniform.



NEW BOOKS

For review in the next KASK magazine, *Kayak Fishing* by Tim Taylor and a second volume of *Sea Kayaker's Deep Trouble*.



HUMOUR

Pills for the Bull

I recently spent \$2,500 on a young Black Angus bull. I put him out with the herd but he just ate grass and wouldn't even look at the cows. I was beginning to think I had paid more for that bull than he was worth. Anyhow, I had the Vet come have a look at him. He said the bull was very healthy, but possibly just a little young, so he gave me some pills to feed him once per day. The bull started to service the cows within two days - all my cows! He even broke through the fence and bred all my neighbour's cows! He's like a machine. I don't know what was in the pills the Vet gave him but they kind of taste like peppermint.

Old Lady & the Biker

A burly biker stopped by the local Harley shop to have his bike fixed. They couldn't do it while he waited, so he said he didn't live far away and would just walk home. On the way home, he stopped at the hardware store and bought a bucket and an anvil. He also stopped by the feed store and livestock dealer and picked up a couple of chickens and a goose. However, struggling outside the store, he now had a problem - how to carry his purchases home.

While he is scratching his head he was approached by a little old lady who told him she was lost. She asked, "Can you tell me how to get to 1603 Pettigrew Lane?" The biker said, "Well, as a matter of fact, I live at 1616 Pettigrew Lane. I would walk you home but I can't carry all this stuff."

The old lady suggested, "Why don't you put the anvil in the bucket, carry the bucket in one hand, put a chicken under each arm and carry the goose in your other hand?" "Why thank you very much," the biker said and proceeded to walk the old girl home.

On the way he said, "Let's take my short cut and go down this alley. We'll be there in no time." The little old lady looked him over

cautiously then said, "I am a lonely widow without a husband to defend me. How do I know that when we get in the alley, you won't hold me up against the wall and have your wicked way with me?"

The biker said, "Holy smoke lady! I am carrying a bucket, an anvil, two chickens, and a goose. How in the world could I possibly hold you up against the wall and do that?"

The lady replied, "Set the goose down, cover him with the bucket, put the anvil on top of the bucket, and I'll hold the chickens."

Last Requests

Edinburgh man, Wullie McTavish, is on his deathbed; he knows his end is nigh. He is with the nurse, his wife, his daughter and two sons.

"So," he says to them. "Bernie, I want you to take the Braid Hills houses. Sybil, take the flats over in Morningside and Bruntsfield. Tam, I want you to take the offices in Charlotte Square. Sarah, my dear wife, please take all the residential buildings in New Town."

The nurse is just blown away by all this, and as Wullie slips away, she says, "Mrs. McTavish, your husband must have been such a hard working man to have accumulated all this property." Sarah replies, "Property? The bugger has a paper round!"

Cold Morning

Blonde wife texts husband on a cold winter's morning: "Windows frozen, won't open."

Husband texts back, "Gently pour some lukewarm water over it."

Wife texts back five minutes later, "Computer really screwed up now."

Quick-Witted

A policeman pulls over a bloke in a battered, rusty old Holden HQ. As the policeman approached the vehicle, he notices the bloke smacking his dog over the head.

"Why are you hitting the dog?" the policeman asks.

The bloke replied, "The little buggers has just eaten my registration sticker."

Age and Wisdom

The guys were on a motorbike tour. No one wanted to room with Mick, because he snored so badly. They decided it wasn't fair to make one of them stay with him the whole time, so they voted to take turns.

The first guy slept with Mick and comes to breakfast the next morning with his hair a mess and his eyes all bloodshot. They said, "Man, what happened to you?"

He said, "Mick snored so loudly, I just sat up and watched him all night."

The next night it was a different guy's turn. In the morning, same thing, hair all standing up, eyes all bloodshot.

They said, "Man, what happened to you? You look awful!"

He said, "Man, that Mick shakes the roof with his snoring. I watched him all night."

The third night was Bill's turn. He was a tanned, older biker, a man's man. The next morning he came to breakfast bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. "Good morning!" he said. They couldn't believe it.

They said, "Man, what happened?" He said, "Well, we got ready for bed. I went and tucked Mick into bed, patted him on the bum, and kissed him good night on the lips. Mick sat up and watched me all night." With age comes wisdom.

Bartering for Beer

This morning I was in luck and was able to buy two cartons of Speights beer cheap at the local supermarket. I placed the boxes on the front seat and headed back home. I stopped at a service station for fuel where a drop-dead gorgeous blonde in a short skirt was filling up her car at the next pump. She glanced at the two boxes of beer, bent over and leaned in my passenger window, and said in a sexy voice:

"I'm a big believer in barter, old fella. Would you be interested in trading sex for beer?"

I thought for a few seconds and asked, "What kind of beer 'ya got?"

KASK

KASK, the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc., a network of New Zealand sea kayakers, has the objectives of:

1. promoting and encouraging the sport of sea kayaking
2. promoting safety standards
3. developing techniques & equipment
4. dealing with issues of coastal access and protection
5. organizing an annual sea kayak forum
6. publishing a bimonthly newsletter.

The Sea Canoeist Newsletter is published bimonthly as the official newsletter of the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc.

Articles, trip reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letters to the editor, and moments when the word 'Bugger!' was said singularly or often (referred to by some as incidents) are sought to enliven the pages of the newsletter.

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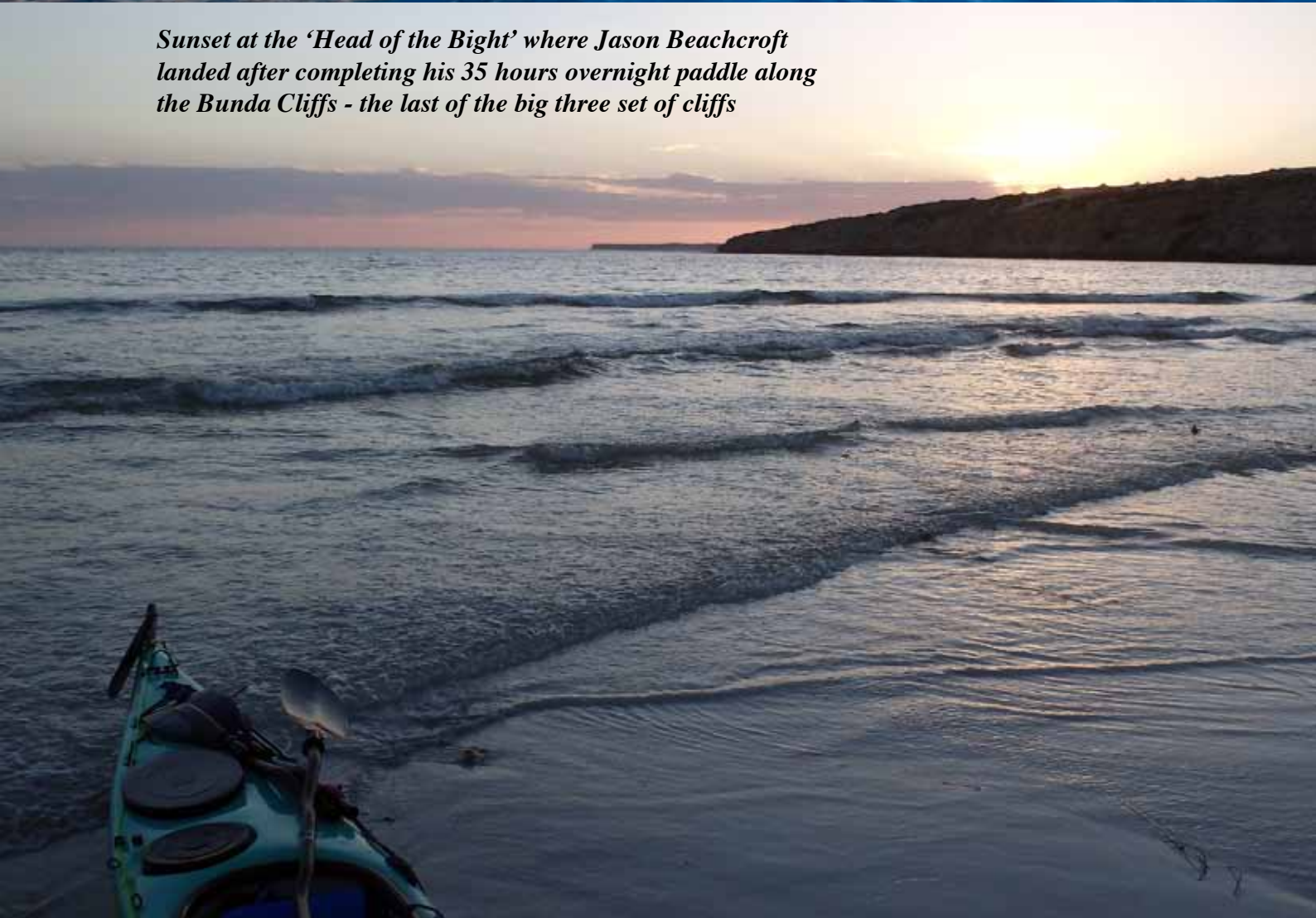
Amaruk plastic, double sea kayak,
with sprayskirts and other bits and
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\$1,800 ONO. Kept in garage when
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(04) 232 6822

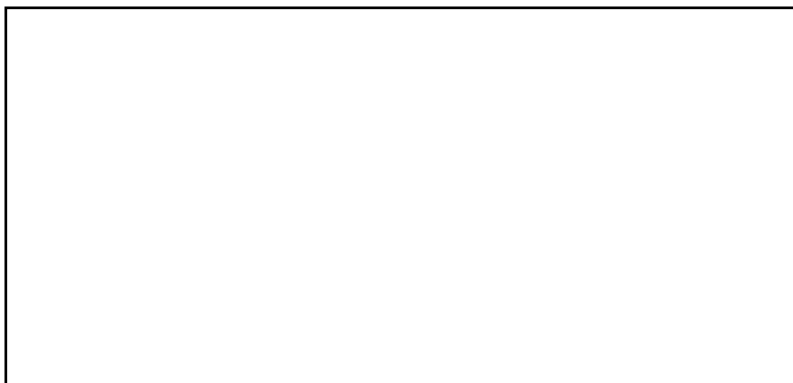


Jason Beachcroft after sunrise on day 2 of his paddle along the 186 km long Bunda cliffs in the Great Australian Bight



Sunset at the 'Head of the Bight' where Jason Beachcroft landed after completing his 35 hours overnight paddle along the Bunda Cliffs - the last of the big three set of cliffs

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*Abi (left) and Eve on a drizzly Stewart Island morning in November 2013, about to join Tara Mulvany on the first stage of Tara's circumnavigation of the island. The two-storied Halfmoon Bay hotel is in the background
Photo: Tara Mulvany*

KASK MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Current membership fees are:

- \$35 for ordinary membership
- \$40 for family or joint membership
- \$35 for overseas membership (PDF newsletter only)

- KASK memberships runs 1 August to 31 July the following year
- a subscription due notice and up to two reminders are sent out with the newsletters between June and October
- if a membership renewal is not received by 30 September, membership lapses
- new members who join between 1 June and 31 July automatically get their membership credited to the following year, receiving a 14 month membership
- the KASK committee puts its emphasis on confirming renewals from existing members from July to October; and promoting new KASK memberships from November to February

